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S. A. Forbes.

Grierson's Cavalry Raid

By S. A. FORBES.

Formerly Captain Company B, Seventh Illinois Cavalry.

Address before the Illinois State Historical Society, at its Eighth
Annual Meeting, Springfield, Ill.,
January 24, 1907.

Reprinted from the Transactions of the Society.

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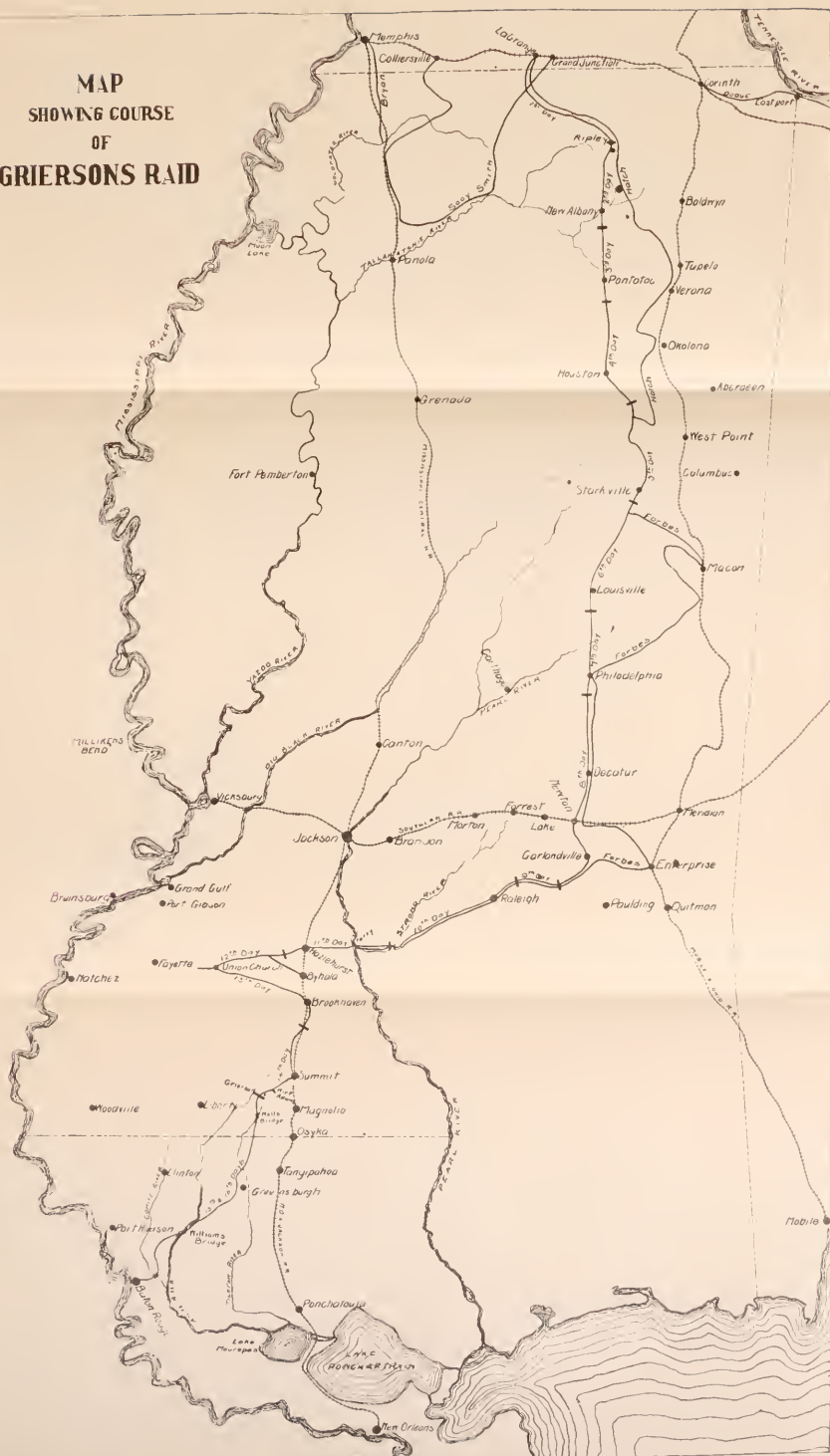
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MAP
SHOWING COURSE
OF
GRIERSONS RAID



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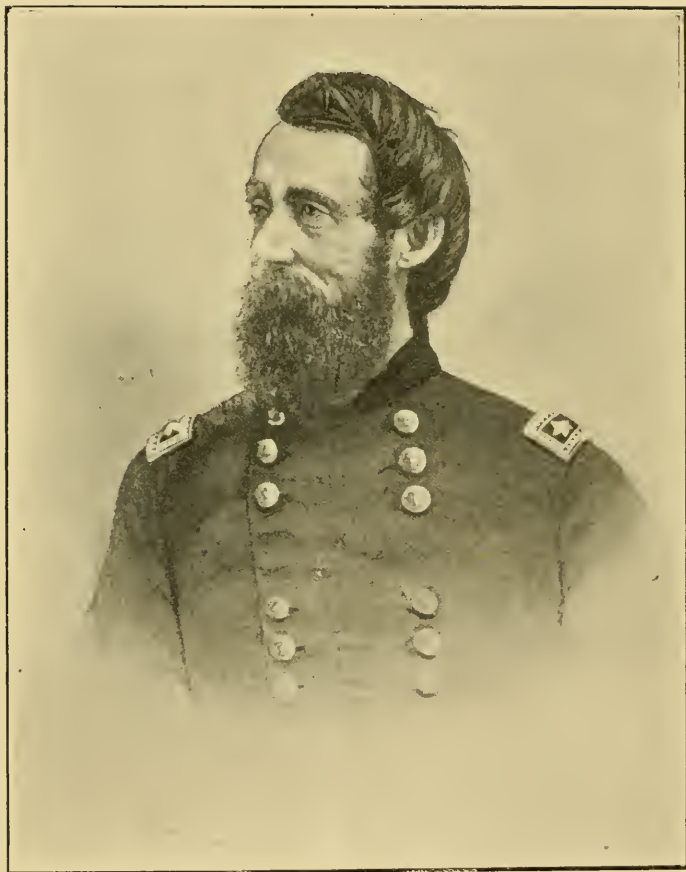
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GEN. BENJAMIN H. GRIERSON.

GRIERSON'S CAVALRY RAID.

By S. A. Forbes.

Formerly Captain, Company B, Seventh Illinois Cavalry.

The Grierson raid, made in April, 1863, from Lagrange, in western Tennessee, to Baton Rouge, Louisiana, was the first of the great federal cavalry raids of the Civil War, and one of the most brilliantly successful. It was a rapid ride of some six hundred miles* through the heart of the enemy's country, made by a mounted force of less than a thousand men,† belonging to two Illinois regiments, the Sixth and Seventh Cavalry, commanded by B. H. Grierson, colonel of the Sixth. It had for its principal object the destruction of the railways in the rear of Vicksburg, the sole remaining means of transportation of supplies and men to that Confederate stronghold at a time when both supplies and men were desperately needed.

The force which made the ride to Baton Rouge consisted wholly of Illinois men, under an Illinois leader, although the Second Iowa Cavalry, belonging to the same brigade, accompanied the column for the first four days, and was then sent back to the starting point as a foil to the pursuit. When I add that the commander of the district under whose direction the expedition was planned and by whose orders it was set on foot, was Major-General S. A. Hurlbut, also an Illinoisan, a citizen of Belvidere, and that his immediate superior, by whose final authority the raid was made, was General U. S. Grant of Illinois, I doubt not that it will be conceded that the history of this Mississippi campaign may properly enough be called a legitimate part of the history of this State.

It was my good fortune to make this ride, a youth of 18 at the time, first sergeant of a company of the Seventh Illinois, of which my brother, H. C. Forbes, was captain. It was my first experience in a free field after seven months' absence from my regiment, four of them in a southern prison and three in a northern hospital following thereupon. It naturally made a vivid impression at the time, one which has by no means wholly faded yet, and I am sure the reader will pardon me if, in the course of this paper, I sometimes fail to keep the even pace of the calm historian or to muster the items of this narrative in perfectly correct perspective.

*Grierson's Report. *Rebellion Records*. Ser. I, vol. 24, pt. I, p. 528.

†Grierson's Report. *Reb. Rec.*, Ser. I, vol. 24, pt. I, p. 523.

I have had, in preparing it, the great advantage of a voluminous manuscript upon the subject, left at his death by my brother, Captain H. C. Forbes, afterwards lieutenant-colonel of his regiment and brevet colonel of volunteers, and I have consulted all the official reports, dispatches, and other papers on the raid printed in the various volumes of the records of the rebellion.* I have also made occasional use of a contemporary personal narrative by a sergeant of the Seventh Illinois Cavalry, Mr. R. W. Surby, published by him in 1865;† and have collected a considerable number of articles from newspapers, northern and southern, printed in the early part of 1863.

During the late winter and early spring of 1863 the center of military interest in the Mississippi valley was at Vicksburg, where all things were shaping themselves towards the tragic climax of the confederate surrender on the following July 4. Grant was about to shift his army, on the west side of the river, by land from Milliken's Bend above that point to Bruinsburg below it, and, crossing the river there, to swing to the north and east through Mississippi, breaking loose from his base of supplies and investing Vicksburg from the rear. Pemberton, at Jackson, was in command of the confederate forces in Mississippi and eastern Louisiana. The confederate General Gardner was at Port Hudson with some 20,000 men, 1,400 of them cavalry‡ and the federal General Augur was at Baton Rouge. Grand Gulf, thirty miles below Vicksburg, was occupied by the confederate General Bowen; Port Gibson, by a small confederate cavalry force under Colonel Wirt Adams; § and Natchez, by a still smaller one, a part of Adams' regiment, under Captain Cleveland.||

In central Tennessee the armies under Rosecrans and Bragg were confronting each other at Murfreesboro and Tullahoma, respectively, both slowly recovering from the effects of the battle of Stone river—terrific to victor and victim alike—and each mainly interested, for the time, in keeping the other from reinforcing either Grant on the one hand or Pemberton on the other.

In northern Mississippi and western Tennessee two parties to an approaching conflict were facing each other on either side of the interstate boundary, the northern party strung along the old Memphis and Charleston railroad, from Memphis on the west to Corinth on the east; and the southern party, less compactly formed—rather loosely scattered, indeed—through the northern part of Mississippi, with Panola, on the Tallahatchie, at its western end and Columbus at its eastern. This difference in formation was partly due to the fact that

*The War of the Rebellion—a Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies; Ser. I, vol. XXIV, Parts I and III. Cited in these notes as *Reb. rec.*, vol. 24, pts. I and III; or *R. R. 24*, pts. I and III.

†Grisler's Raids, and Hatch's Sixty-four Days' March, with Biographical Sketches, and the Life and Adventures of Chickasaw, the Scout. By R. W. Surby, Chicago, 1865. Cited here as "Surby". This graphic narrative by a sergeant of the Seventh Illinois Cavalry, well known to the present writer, although marred by many typographical errors, especially in local and personal names, is entirely reliable as to matters which came under the author's personal observations, and commonly so as to events occurring in his immediate neighborhood.

‡Department Returns, March 31, 1863. *Reb. rec.*, ser. I, vol. 24, pt. III, p. 702. But see Gardner to Pemberton, April 29, pt. III, p. 803.

§Col. Wirt Adams to General Pemberton, April 29, 1863. *Reb. rec.*, ser. I, vol. 24, pt. I, p. 533.

||Report of Capt. S. B. Cleveland, April 28. *Reb. rec.*, ser. I, vol. 24, pt. I, p. 538; and Col. Wirt Adams to Gen. Pemberton, April 29, p. 533.



HENRY CLINTON FORBES,

Lieutenant Colonel and Brevet Colonel Seventh Illinois Cavalry. Captain of Company
B. at the time of Grierson's Raid.

the confederates were holding two north and south roads, the Mississippi Central and the Mobile and Ohio, while the line held by the federals ran east and west. Hurlbut of Illinois was at Memphis as district commander in charge of the northern line, Dodge was at Corinth and Sooy Smith had his headquarters at Lagrange, about midway between, holding the railroad with some 10,000 men, the Second Iowa and the Sixth and Seventh Illinois Cavalry regiments among them.* Chalmers was in charge of the western part of the confederate forces, with headquarters at Panola, where he had about a thousand cavalry and a battery of artillery; † and Ruggles, at Columbus, was in command of about 2,000 men on the eastern side of the state, ‡ both generals taking their orders from Pemberton direct. Chalmers' district extended to New Albany, on the Tallahatchie, § and his picket line was on that stream to the east, and to the west on the Coldwater, south of Memphis. Ruggles' advance post was at Verona, || south of Corinth, with a picket north to Baldwyn, and his district extended west to New Albany. From this point to Panola there was no occupied post, the country being covered only by occasional scouting parties, pickets and patrols. It will be seen that this southern line, if line it can be called, had no common commander corresponding to Hurlbut on the north, and that it had no center guard opposed to Sooy Smith at Lagrange—defects of organization and position to which the subsequent confederate disaster was in great measure due. Northern Mississippi had, indeed, been largely stripped of cavalry in January, when General Van Dorn was sent to eastern Tennessee with 5,000 mounted men to report to Bragg. ¶ The famous Forrest was also in Tennessee, at Shelbyville, under Van Dorn's command.

Such was the situation in April, when there swarmed out from the north, suddenly and almost simultaneously, five swiftly moving columns, two of them cavalry raids, and the others feints or diversions made in aid or support of these two. Colonel A. D. Straight, sent by Rosecrans, from Nashville, a long roundabout way, down the Cumberland and up the Tennessee, with about 1,900 men to Eastport, Alabama, left the Tennessee river there and started east and south through northern Alabama to destroy railroads, stores and manufactories. His force was wretchedly mounted, mainly on mules secured after the start, and Forrest's excellent cavalry, dropping down from Shelbyville on his rear, presently overtook and surrounded him and captured his whole command near Rome, Georgia, on the 3d of May. Partly to support Straight's expedition, but mainly to draw the confederate cavalry to the east, away from the line of march of the Grierson raid about to start from Lagrange, Dodge left Corinth for Tusculumbia April 16

*Department returns, April 30, First Div., 16th Army Corps. R. R., I, vol. 24, pt. III, p. 249; see also p. 253.

†Department Returns, March 31. R. R. I, vol. 24, pt. III, p. 702. See also Hurlbut to Grant April 1, pt. I, p. 27. General Hurlbut estimated Chalmers' force at 1,800 cavalry and one battery. Hurlbut to W. S. Smith, April 10, pt. III, p. 185.

‡R. R., 24, pt. III, p. 702.

§General Orders No. 93. R. R., vol. 24, pt. III, p. 713.

||Hurlbut to Grant, April 1. R. R., ser. I, vol. 24, pt. I, p. 26.

¶Report of General J. E. Johnston to Adjutant General Cooper. R. R., vol. 24, pt. I, p. 247. Report of Maj. Wm. D. Blackburn, January 30, pt. I, p. 334. Dodge to Hamilton, Feb. 12, pt. III, p. 46.

with 5,000 men,* met Streight there April 24, went with him to Courtland, in Lawrence county, and returned to Corinth on the 2d of May. The effect of this movement in concentrating Ruggles' cavalry to the north and east is shown by Pemberton's order to Ruggles of April 19, that he should send all his mounted troops towards Corinth to create a diversion in favor of Roddy at Tuscumbia† thus threatened by Dodge.

Simultaneously with these movements at the eastern end of our line, a mixed force of infantry, cavalry and artillery moved south from Memphis to the Coldwater, twenty-five miles away on the Panola road, as if to drive Chalmers from his headquarters;‡ and on the following day another column of three regiments of infantry with a battery of artillery, under Sooy Smith, moved diagonally southwest from Lagrange to the same objective, in the hope of cutting Chalmers off.§ Although the Memphis column failed to cross the Coldwater, and Chalmers eluded Smith, he was kept completely occupied until April 23, when he returned to Panola.

And now, with the thin confederate line in northern Mississippi thus completely pulled apart and piled up at its ends, there suddenly shot down through its abandoned center a slender column of 1,500 cavalry, thrust, like a nimble sword through an unguarded point, into the very vitals of the confederate position.¶ Seasoned soldiers, most of them, well mounted and well armed, fresh from a winter's rest in camp (if cavalry can ever be said to rest), gay with youth and the hope of fresh adventure, with no baggage to encumber them save what was strapped to their saddles, carrying each forty rounds of ammunition, five days' rations and a good supply of salt, they were an exceptionally fit party for a hard and rapid cavalry raid—and hard and rapid this ride was to be, taxing to its limit the physical endurance of nearly every man, and putting a strain on the mental resources of its leaders which doubtless no one else can fully realize.

A cavalry raid at its best is essentially a *game* of strategy and speed, with personal violence as an incidental complication. It is played according to more or less definite rules, not inconsistent, indeed, with the players' killing each other if the game cannot be won in any other way; but it is commonly a strenuous game, rather than a bloody one, intensely exciting, but not necessarily very dangerous. This narrative will consequently be without the grim and gory features of

*Hurlbut to Halleck, April 18. R. R. vol. 24, pt. III, p. 206.

†Report of Lieut.-General J. C. Pemberton. R. R., 24, pt. I, p. 253.

‡Lauman to Bryan, April 17. R. R., 24, pt. III, p. 203. Hurlbut to Halleck, April 18, p. 206. Bryan to Randall, April 25, pt. I, p. 557.

§Hurlbut to Smith, April 15, par. 2, R. R., 24, pt. III, p. 196. Hurlbut to Kelton, May 5, par. 5 and 6, pt. I, p. 520. Smith to Hurlbut, April 23, p. 555. Hurlbut to Rawlins, April 25, p. 555. Chalmers to Pemberton, April 23, p. 563.

¶See Hurlbut to Rawlins, April 17, 1863. "These various movements along our length of line will, I hope, so distract their attention that Grierson's party will get a fair start and be well down to their destination before they can be resisted by adequate force. God speed him, for he has started gallantly on a long and perilous ride."—R. R., 24, pt. III, p. 202. See also Hurlbut to Rawlins, May 5, 1863. "The movement on Tuscumbia on one side drew attention and gathered their cavalry in that direction, while the movement on Coldwater and Panola drew Chalmers and his band in the other. Thus our gallant soldier, Grierson, proceeded with his command unchallenged." Vol. 24, pt. III, p. 276. Pemberton writes to Johnston, April 29; "Bartean's command gallantly fought and repulsed a column of the enemy at Birmingham" [referring to Hatch.] "Chalmers was occupied with another column from Memphis, moving by the Hernando road, but there was no force to oppose to oppose to Grierson's, a well-equipped and well-mounted force." Vol. 24, pt. III, p. 803.

most tales of war, but will tell instead of the rapid march, the subtle ruse, the gallant dash, the sudden surprise, and the quick and cunning retreat which leaves an opponent miles in the rear before he knows that the fight is over.

It was on the 17th of April, 1863,* the day after Dodge's start to the east from Corinth and Bryan's start to the south from Memphis—the day of Sooy Smith's march from Lagrange towards Panola—that the three regiments were set in motion; and just as the sun rose full and fine over a charming expanse of small pine-clad hills, the first brigade, stretching itself slowly out from the little village, slid like a huge serpent into the cover of the Mississippi woods.

In the northern third of the state the streams run southwest into the Mississippi and southeast into the Tombigbee, leaving the second tier of counties from the east as a watershed. Along this watershed the course of the column lay, approximately parallel for about eighty miles to the Mobile and Ohio railroad, distant from twelve to twenty-five miles to the east. As this road was held by Ruggles up to within thirty miles of Corinth, Grierson was particularly exposed, in this stage of his movement, both to flank attack and to pursuit in force sufficient greatly to embarrass and delay, if not finally to defeat, his expedition. It was his first object, consequently, after getting fairly under way, to confuse and mislead the enemy as to the scope and object of his plans and to draw him off, if possible, in pursuit of a detachment thrown out as a decoy, leaving the main column to pursue its way unhindered. On the third day of the raid, after the command had crossed the Tallahatchie at and near New Albany, three detachments were sent out by Grierson in as many different directions—two of them moving against camps of state troops in process of organization, with a view to creating the impression that it was the whole object of the raid to break up these camps.† A demonstration towards one of them at Chesterville, to Grierson's left, drew to that point the attention of Colonel C. R. Barteau,‡ in command of all the confederate cavalry in the northeast part of the state,§ and he marched with a regiment to that place for its defense. If he had followed up the retiring federal detachment, he would have come at once upon Grierson's column; but instead of this he fell back some fifteen miles to the south and east to cover Okolona and Aberdeen, important railroad points which he thought were threatened.¶ Finding that he was not pursued, he moved northwest again to Pontotoc,¶ and learning there that Grierson had already passed to the south,** he immediately gave pursuit with his own regiment, a regiment of state troops, two additional battalions, and three pieces of artillery. That night he

*Grierson to Rawlins, May 5, R. R., 24, pt. 1, p. 522.

†Grierson to Rawlins, May 5, R. R., 24, pt. 1, p. 522.

‡Barteau to Hooe, R. R., 24, pt. 1, p. 534.

§Circular of Adj. B. A. Smith, April 5, R. R., 24, pt. III, p. 716.

¶Barteau to Hooe, April 30, R. R., 24, pt. I, p. 534.

*Barteau to Hooe, April 30, R. R., 24, pt. I, p. 534. Ruggles to Pemberton, April 20,

p. 551.
 **The return, April 20 from Pontotoc to Lagrange of 175 of the least effective men, together with prisoners, led horses, and a single gun of the battery, was managed with the intention of leading any pursuing force to believe that the whole column had turned back. R. R., 24, pt. I, pp. 523, 534. As it had no such consequence, however, I have not mentioned it in the text.

rested for three hours within thirteen miles of Grierson's camp, which he reached next day two hours after Grierson had gone on.*

Then came a lucky stroke of strategy, by which this strong pursuing force was lured away from the track of the column and led no less than fifty miles to the north† in pursuit of a regiment detached by Grierson to return to Lagrange. On April 21, the fourth day of the raid, when about eighteen miles below Houston, the county seat of Chickasaw county, Grierson sent Colonel Hatch with the Second Iowa Cavalry, numbering about 500 men,‡ to the west and south on the West Point road, with orders involving a very ambitious program of capture and destruction for so small a force. Striking the Mobile and Ohio road where it crosses the Okatibbehah near West Point, and destroying the bridge across that stream, Hatch was next to move rapidly south to Macon for the destruction of railroad and government stores, and swinging around to the east and north, was to take Columbus, if possible, to break up the railroad south of Okolona, and then to return to Lagrange.

On hearing of the arrival of the raid at Pontotoc, Ruggles had surmised that its principal object was the destruction of these very railroad bridges at Macon and West Point,§ and had taken his defensive measures accordingly. Pemberton had also ordered troops from Meridian northward to report to Ruggles on the preceding day,|| and all threatened points were thus more or less thoroughly guarded against attack. Fortunately, perhaps, for Hatch, Barteau's pursuing force was too near to permit him to become very deeply entangled in this dangerous enterprise. Coming, in his pursuit of Grierson, to the point where Hatch and Grierson had parted, Barteau mistook the trail of the Second Iowa for that of the main command. "The enemy divided at this point," he says, "two hundred going to Starkville and seven hundred continuing their march on the West Point road,"¶ whereas the Starkville force was Grierson's column, containing now, after the withdrawal of Hatch, about 950 men.** Following up the Second Iowa Cavalry towards West Point, Barteau overtook it within about five miles and attacked it heavily in rear and on the flanks, the Second Alabama Cavalry barring its way at the same time towards West Point. †† Hatch thus suddenly found himself between two fires; but while Barteau was moving to the right and left, hoping to surround and capture him, he broke through the enveloping line to the rear and, retiring slowly northward, drew the enemy after him in a series of rear-end skirmishes which lasted until the 24th—the eighth day of the raid, and the very one on which Grierson reached the

*Barteau to Hooe, April 30, R. R. 24, pt. I, p. 534.

†To Molino, Miss. See Hatch to Harland, April 27, R. R. 24, pt. I, p. 531. The force which attacked Hatch at Birmingham was that of Col. Barteau—not that of Chalmers, as Hatch supposed. Barteau to Hooe, April 30, R. R. 24, pt. I, p. 536.

‡Grierson to Rawlins, May 5, R. R. 24, pt. I, p. 523. Hatch to Harland, April 27, p. 530.

§Ruggles to Memminger, May 13, R. R. 24, pt. I, p. 560, par. 2.

||Pemberton to commanding officer of troops at Meridian, April 22, and Pemberton to Ruggles, April 22, R. R. 24, pt. III, p. 776.

¶Barteau to Hooe, April 30, R. R. 24, pt. I, p. 534.

**Grierson to Rawlins, May 5, R. R. 24, pt. I, p. 523.

††Hatch to Harland, April 27, R. R. 24, pt. I, p. 530, par. 4. Cunningham to Ruggles, April 21, p. 552.



JOHN LYNCH,

Colonel Sixth Illinois Cavalry, Captain of Company E. at Time of Grierson Raid.

Meridian and Vicksburg road. Touching the Mobile and Ohio at Okolona, Hatch paused long enough to burn public property there, and finally reached Lagrange on the 26th.*

Freed by this diversion of Barteau from all danger of pursuit, and with no enemy before him or within striking distance upon either flank, Grierson was now well within the line of confederate defense, with no opposing force worth mentioning between him and his goal. His only chance of failure was in a correct interpretation of his movement by Pemberton, and the concentration of troops by rail across his line of march—a danger which induced still further feints against the Mobile and Ohio road, intended to keep confederate attention focused on the protection of that line.

Unable to detach another considerable body for this purpose from his principal force, he sent out on his flank a single company of thirty-five men under Captain H. C. Forbes of the Seventh Illinois,† with orders to approach Macon, on the railroad, and if possible to break the telegraph and the road in its vicinity and rejoin the main command. As this command was to be speeding southward in the meantime at its highest possible rate, the chance was very remote that this little band would ever rejoin their comrades, unless, indeed, in a confederate prison.

Strangely enough, this fragment of a company, ludicrously inadequate to its purpose as it seemed, accomplished quite as much as if it had been ten times as large. Approaching Macon April 22, it spent the night in bivouac within two and a half miles of that town, capturing from a patrol sent out from Macon as a scout, a prisoner, from whom it was learned that a train of infantry and artillery were hourly expected from the south. This statement is confirmed by the report of Captain John Lynch‡ of the Sixth Illinois who, coming out from Louisville and approaching the town next morning by another road, with one companion, both in citizen's dress, found a picket on the road, from whom he learned that the place was held by two regiments of cavalry, a regiment of infantry and a section of artillery.§

A Macon paper of the following day also reports the arrival, during the night, of two thousand men from Meridian, evidently pursuant to Pemberton's order of this date already mentioned. Except for the disturbance caused by this evening patrol, our little company slept as securely under the trees by the roadside as if protected by impregnable works, its sole defense against capture or death being the wildly exaggerated reports of the strength of the federal column which were

*Hatch to Harland, April 22. R. R. 24, pt. I, p. 531.

†Grierson to Rawlins, May 5. R. R. 24, pt. I, p. 528, par. 2.

‡Grierson to Rawlins, May 5, R. R. 24, pt. I, p. 528, par. 4, Surby, p. 39.

§"He went to the pickets at the edge of the town," says Grierson, "ascertained the whole disposition of their forces and much other valuable information, and, returning, joined us at Decatur, having ridden without interruption two days and nights, without a moment's rest. All honor to the gallant captain, whose intrepid coolness and daring characterized him on every occasion." Captain Lynch, afterwards major, lieutenant-colonel, and colonel of the Sixth Illinois Cavalry, now lives at Olney, Illinois.

by this time flying through the country in all directions, growing as they flew. Our own little squad was believed in Macon that night to be the main body of the raid and to consist of 5,000 men.*

Grierson, in the meantime, sped down through Starkville and Louisville on the 22d, secured the bridge across Pearl river by a stratagem of the advance on the morning of the 23d,† passed through Philadelphia, in Neshoba county, at 3:00 p. m., reached Decatur at day dawn of the 24th after an all-night ride, and struck the Meridian and Jackson road at Newton station, the object of his long swift ride, at 6:00 in the morning of this, the eighth day of the raid.‡ Here two trains of cars were captured and destroyed, one filled with food and ammunition, including several thousand loaded shells, and the other with machinery and railroad ties. Commissary and quartermaster's stores were burned, five hundred stand of arms were broken up, seventy-five prisoners were captured and paroled, and the railroad was wrecked and its bridges were burned (two of them about 150 feet long each) for four and a half miles to the east.§ The seriousness of the blow thus delivered is shown by Pemberton's statement to Gardner that there is danger that his supplies will be cut off,|| and by his earnest appeal, written six days later to the president of the road, urging him to repair the break in his line with the greatest possible expedition, as a large part of the supplies from the Vicksburg army must thereafter come over this road.¶ Time was indeed precious to him when he wrote, for Grant's advance had just crossed the Mississippi to the Vicksburg side, and in thirteen days more McPherson was at Clinton, between Vicksburg and Jackson, effectually destroying this same road.

The confusion, uncertainty and concern wrought in confederate counsels by this daring raid,** are revealed in the multiplicity of orders sent out and the numerous, complex movements of considerable bodies of infantry, cavalry and artillery made in various parts of the state for the prevention of further mischief and the capture, if possible, of the venturesome party, now isolated in the midst of its foes.

*"Report made the number about 5,000, but it was reduced to one company of cavalry, numbering about eighty men, which reached the residence of Mrs. Augustine, about two, and a half miles from town at daylight [twilight] of Wednesday. They took supper there, and breakfast the next morning, when they ranged to the northwest portion of the county, robbing individuals and houses, in some cases, and providing themselves with what provisions they wanted. They crossed the Noxubee at Crawford's bridge, taking with them several citizens as prisoners. Young John Bryson they took while at Mrs. Augustine's place. He ventured within their lines with a gun in his hand and a uniform coat on. He is still a prisoner. * * * Mr. Woodfin's parole we have seen. It is countersigned H. C. Forbes, commanding Co. C. [B.] 7th Regiment, Ill. Vol. U. S. Army. * * * There was a very considerable stampede for twenty miles around in this county, the most of those running striking for the Bigbee to cross over into Alabama. Now that they have disappeared the general impression is that while they were near town the whole company could have been captured by fifty well organized men under a proper leader. Mr. Dinsmore rode towards the camp, tied his horse in the woods, and walked to the quarters and inquired of the negroes if the Federals were there. They said they were in the house eating supper. Not ten men could be raised about Macon to attack them. At 3:00 o'clock in the morning 2,000 of our troops came up from Meridian, but they were either not informed of the presence of the Federal company or did not choose to disturb the repose of our quondam friends."—Macon *Beacon*, quoted in Paulding, (Miss.) *Clarion* of May 1, 1863.

†Surby, p. 36.

‡Grierson's report. R. R., 24 pt. I, p. 524.

§Gen. John Adams reports to Pemberton April 25, that eleven bridges had been burned between Newton and Meridian. R. R., 24, pt. I, p. 531. See also Appendix, Note B, extract from the Jackson *Appeal*.

||Pemberton to Gardner, April 24, R. R., 24, pt. I, p. 315.

¶Pemberton to President of Southern Railroad, April 30, R. R., 24, pt. I, p. 315.

**"So great was the consternation created by this raid that it was impossible to obtain any reliable information of the enemy's movements, rumor placing him in various places at the same time."—Lieut. General Pemberton's report on the Vicksburg Campaign, R. R., 24, pt. I, p. 253.

Pemberton first learned of the raid three days after its start,* and at once placed all the cavalry north of the Meridian road at the disposal of Ruggles and Chalmers,† Buford's infantry brigade, moving at this time by rail from Chattanooga to Jackson to reinforce Pemberton, was stopped by him at Meridian April 22 and ordered up the road to Ruggles.‡ To intercept the raiders on their return to the north, after their arrival at Newton Station, Featherston's brigade was shifted from Fort Pemberton, on the Yazoo, east to Grenada;§ Tilghman, at Canton, was ordered to mount one of his infantry regiments and sent half his force to meet Grierson if he came back by Carthage,|| and Chalmers was ordered across the state from Panola to Okolona,¶ with 1,500 men. Ruggles also distributed his mounted troops to head off Grierson if he should return through northeast Mississippi.** On the Meridian line John Adams was moved, with his infantry, cavalry and artillery, from Jackson east to Morton, Forest and Lake;‡‡ Loring was ordered to mount as many men as he could along the Mobile & Ohio road; ‡‡Stevenson, at Vicksburg, was directed to guard the Big Black river bridge and to keep in readiness for immediate movement all troops not absolutely necessary to hold his lines; §§ and the governor of the state was urged to seize at once horses enough to mount a regiment of infantry.‡‡‡ To prevent an escape of the federal column to the south, Gardner was ordered, April 24, to send his cavalry from Port Hudson east towards Tangipahoa, ¶¶ on the present Illinois Central railroad, and Simonton, at Ponchatoula, received similar orders.***

Even the capital of the state was thought by Pemberton to be endangered, and all possible precautions were taken against its capture. An appeal was issued to the citizens of the state to arm and organize for their own defense.††† John Adams wired, April 25, to Johnston, in Tennessee, ‡‡‡ by Pemberton's direction, that Pemberton was "sorely pressed on all sides," and urgently desired that 2,000 cavalry be sent from the east to fall on Grierson's rear; and wired also to Buckner, commanding the department of the gulf: "All is lost unless you can send a regiment or two to Meridian. General Pemberton directs me to urge you to send"§§§—an expression of panic and dismay which

*Pemberton to Johnston, April 29, R. R. 24, pt. III, p. 802. Pemberton to Ruggles, April 29, p. 770.

†Pemberton's report, R. R. 24, pt. I, p. 252.

‡Pemberton's report, R. R. 24, pt. I, p. 253. Pemberton to commanding officer of troops at Meridian, April 22, pt. III, p. 776. Also Pemberton to Thompson, April 22, p. 777.

§Pemberton to Featherston, April 24, R. R. 24, pt. III, p. 782. Pemberton's report, pt. I, p. 251. Smith to Hurlbut, April 29, pt. I, p. 521.

¶Pemberton to Tilghman, April 24, R. R. 24, pt. III, p. 783.

||Pemberton's report, R. R. 24, pt. I, p. 254. Smith to Hurlbut, April 29, pt. I, p. 521. Pemberton to Chalmers, April 24, pt. III, p. 781. Pemberton to Johnston, April 26, pt. III, p. 789.

**Ruggles to Memminger, May 13, R. R. 24, pt. I, p. 561.

‡‡Pemberton to Adams, April 24, R. R. 24, pt. III, p. 781. Adams to Pemberton, April 26, p. 789. Portis to Memminger, April 24, pt. I, p. 546.

‡‡‡Pemberton's report, R. R. 24, pt. I, p. 254.

§§Pemberton to Stevenson, April 27, R. R. 24, pt. III, p. 794. Taylor to Stevenson, April 25, p. 788.

¶¶Pemberton to Pettus, April 25, R. R. 24, pt. III, p. 786.

¶¶¶Pemberton's report. R. R. 24, pt. I, p. 254. Pemberton to Gardner, April 24, pt. III, p. 782.

***Pemberton to Simonton, April 24, pt. III, p. 782. Simonton to Wilson, April 30, p. 553.

†††Pemberton to Pettus, April 25, R. R. 24, pt. III, p. 787.

‡‡‡Adams to Pemberton, April 25, R. R. 24, pt. I, p. 532.

§§§Adams to Pemberton, April 25, R. R. 24, pt. I, p. 532.

Pemberton repudiated, however, and ordered Adams to correct.*

In the midst of all this hurry of orders and mustering and marching of men, Grierson's column, exhausted by its tremendous ride, and with harder riding yet to come, moved slowly south and west on the 24th and 25th, with intervals of rest, and securing one good night's sleep.† Although the main object of the raid was not fully accomplished, its most difficult problem, that of the escape of the command, was still to be solved. In entering the state from the north it had in its favor all the advantages of a surprise, and could also count on the enemy's ignorance of the numbers to be met. But surprise was now no longer possible, and the strength of the invading column had by this time been more or less correctly ascertained.

Grierson's instructions, as he interpreted them, left him free to plan his escape according to his own judgment of the circumstances at the time, a fact due to his immediate superior, General William Sooy Smith, through whom Hurlbut's directions were transmitted to him. Hurlbut's written orders to Smith were dated April 10 and April 15,‡ the first a week and the last two days before the start. In the first he says: "Your three regiments of cavalry will strike out by the way of Pontotoc, breaking off right and left, commanding both roads [the Mississippi Central and the Mobile and Ohio], destroying the wires, burning provisions and doing all the mischief they can, while one regiment ranges straight down to Selma or Meridian, breaking the east and west road thoroughly and sweeping back by Alabama." His latest order does not specify the line of Grierson's retreat after the destruction of the Meridian and Jackson road, but nevertheless implies a return to the north by saying, "he may be able to strike Jackson or Columbus."

Sooy Smith and Grierson had previously insisted with Hurlbut, in a conference at Memphis, that it would be far less hazardous for Grierson to push on to Baton Rouge after breaking the Meridian road than to return through Alabama, but Hurlbut did not agree with them and directed a return to the north.§ "This order," Sooy Smith writes me,|| "I received late in an evening. I slept little that night, and in the morning sent for Grierson and told him to get ready for the raid as soon as possible. He asked me which plan had been adopted, and I told him he was to go to Baton Rouge." It was also understood between them that as soon as Grierson had passed the enemy's lines beyond the Tallahatchie, his communications with headquarters being cut off, he would have discretionary power.¶

*Pemberton to Adams, April 25, R. R. 24, pt. III, p. 785.

†Grierson's report. R. R. 24, pt. I, pp. 525, 526.

‡Hurlbut to Smith, April 10 and 15, R. R. 24, pt. III, pp. 185 and 196.

§I find an inexplicable inconsistency between Hurlbut's written orders to Smith and his earlier reports, on the one hand, and his latest statements concerning his orders to Grierson, on the other. (See Hurlbut's orders to Sooy Smith, April 10, R. R. 24, pt. III, p. 185. Hurlbut to Halleck, April 18, pt. III, p. 207. Hurlbut to Rawlins, April 29, pt. I, p. 519. Hurlbut to Halleck, April 29, pt. III, p. 247. Hurlbut to Lincoln, May 2, pt. III, p. 264. Hurlbut to Kelton, May 5, pt. I, p. 520.) That Hurlbut fully expected Grierson to return through Alabama is shown by his dispatch, April 29, of a relief column of three regiments under Hatch, from Lagrange toward Okolona and Columbus. (See Hurlbut to Rawlins, April 29, pt. I, p. 519. Sooy Smith to Hurlbut, April 29, p. 521. Hatch to Morgan, May 5, p. 579.)

||Sooy Smith to S. A. Forbes, Nov. 10, 1905. See Appendix, Note A.

¶Sooy Smith to S. A. Forbes, May 4, 1907. See Note A.

Feeling free, therefore, as he says, "to move in any direction from this point which in my judgment would be best for the safety of my command and the success of the expedition, I at once decided to move south, in order to secure the necessary rest and food for men and horses, and then to return to Lagrange through Alabama or to make for Baton Rouge, as I might thereafter deem best."* Hearing, however, on the 25th that a fight was momentarily expected near Grand Gulf, he decided to make a rapid march in that direction instead, in the "endeavor to get upon the enemy's flank and coöperate with our forces should they be successful in the attack upon Grand Gulf and Port Gibson."† His pursuit of this design carried him west and a little south to cross the New Orleans and Jackson railroad (now the Illinois Central) at Hazlehurst, thirty-three miles below Jackson, on April, 27, and to Union Church, in Jefferson county, by the evening of the 28th.

Although he was thus riding for four days approximately parallel to the road along which most of Pemberton's army lay, at distances varying from fifteen miles at the beginning to forty at the end, his march was unobstructed by the enemy until the 28th. Grierson, in his official report, speaks, indeed, of a regiment of confederate cavalry from Brandon, on the Jackson road, fortunately encountered at night while headed directly for his own camp near Raleigh, and sent in the wrong direction by one of his spies;‡ and this same body is referred to in Surby's volume (p. 60) and also in my brother's manuscript, as a cavalry force of 1,800 men which company B was so fortunate as to evade; but a careful study of the locations and movements of the confederate troops on April 26 shows that this was a cavalry squadron only, headed by Captain R. C. Love, who was ordered by Pemberton on that day to leave Brandon,§ ascertain where Grierson was, and if at Raleigh, to get on his rear, plant ambush and annoy him. Four days later Captain Love and his squadron were still in unsuccessful search of Grierson farther south.||

It was owing to this midnight apparition of a force supposed to be dangerous, in his rear, that Grierson began burning all bridges as he crossed them,¶ thus abandoning to its fate Company B of the Seventh, which he had evidently given up for lost.

This gallant little party, it will be remembered, we left asleep by the roadside two and a half miles from Macon, on the night of the 22d. Satisfied, from the reports received, that it could accomplish nothing in the town itself, it undertook the next day to reach and burn the railroad bridge over the Noxubee river, a few miles below. But finding this to be strongly guarded, it marched in the afternoon towards Philadelphia, where it expected to strike Grierson's trail. Riding all night, except for two hours' rest at Pleasant Springs, it

*Grierson's report. Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 525.

†Grierson's report. Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 525. See also Pemberton to Bowen, April 27, pt. III, p. 792.

‡Grierson's report. Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 525.

§Pemberton to Love. April 26, Reb. rec., 24, pt. III, p. 791.

¶Pemberton to Love, April 28. Reb. rec., 24, pt. III, p. 798.

¶Grierson's report. Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 526.

reached Philadelphia about noon of the 24th, twenty-one hours after the column had passed. A skirmish with a company of home guards, organizing at this place for the pursuit of Grierson, resulted in the capture and parole of about thirty of them, the destruction of their firearms, the appropriation of their very welcome dinner, and the rapid consummation of several horse trades highly advantageous to the federal company, just then very much in need of a remount. As the horses of these home guards had been brought together to overtake Grierson, we gladly took them at their owners' estimate of their fitness for this task—which was also our own.

We traveled always with two or three men, dressed and armed like confederates, riding some distance in advance, to collect information from citizens and to give us warning if they saw any signs of a hostile force. Coming, not far from Philadelphia, to a plantation house by the roadside, we stopped to feed, the bugle blowing the "halt" as a notice to this advance. They did not hear the call, however, and rode on alone. Presently we heard several shots fired far on ahead and knew that our scouts had met an enemy. Hurriedly mounting, we galloped down the road, and within about half a mile, as our horses bolted suddenly to the roadside, we saw one of our men, dead on his back in the middle of the road. His comrades presently came out of the brush, one uninjured, the other with a bullet in his arm. Three stragglers from the confederate army, who had happened to be at a house near by, at which the scouts had stopped for information, charged them—truly enough—with being federal spies. Our men denied the charge, however, and tried to prolong the argument, expecting every moment to see us coming to their support, but the confederates finally fired on them and fled.

It was a serious moment for us, not merely because we had lost a comrade, but because the men who had killed him were ahead of us and now knew who and what we were. The guerilla and the bushwhacker and the ambush by the roadside, familiar to us from two years' service in the field were in all our minds as we rode that day through the thickety woods, scanning every cover and watchful of every turn in the road. We were bound to outride this news of us, and that night we marched without a halt, arriving in the early dawn at Newton Station, still smoking with the fires which Grierson's men had kindled. Grierson had spent the night two miles west of Montrose, about nineteen miles to the south and west from Newton, and he moved the following day only seventeen miles still further to the south and west, camping near Leaf river, on the Raleigh road. A ride of thirty-six miles on the 25th would thus have brought us to his column. But we had arrived at Newton on the morning of that day, fully fifteen hours after Grierson's rear had passed. We had gained but six hours on him by twenty-four hours of steady riding, and it was evident that it would take us, at this rate, at least two days and nights more to come up with the column.

When Company B was detached towards Macon, its captain was told by the colonel of his regiment, Edward Prince of the Seventh, who gave him his orders, that it was highly probable, though not cer-

tain, that Grierson, after crossing the Meridian and Jackson road would swing eastward into Alabama and return to the north through that state; and all information of his movements obtainable at Newton Station confirmed this belief. He had certainly gone on to Garlandville, nine miles south, and it was the prevailing report that he had also reached Baldwin and Quitman, still further south and east—the last a station on the Mobile and Ohio road. These facts suggested to Captain Forbes the very sensible plan of cutting off the southward loop which Grierson was believed to be making, by turning directly east from Newton, crossing the Mobile and Ohio at Enterprise, which he was repeatedly told was without defenders, and joining Grierson beyond the railroad as he passed up to the north.

In pursuance of this plan we took the Enterprise road, and reached the outskirts of that town about 1:00 o'clock. What seemed a mounted picket on the main road, driven in by a few shots from our advance, suggested that the place might indeed be occupied, and as the head of our little column entered one of the streets of the town it was fired on from a stockade about the station. Halting for a moment to consider his course, the captain quickly drew his saber, fastened a handkerchief to its point, and ordering the first file of four to follow him, he and his first lieutenant rode slowly down in the direction of the stockade, waving the handkerchief as a flag of truce. The firing presently ceased, and three confederate officers rode out to meet them, one of whom, carrying a white flag at the end of an infantry ramrod, inquired, "To what are we indebted for the honor of this visit?" "I come from Major-General Grierson," answered Captain Forbes, "to demand the surrender of Enterprise." "Will you put the demand in writing?" "Certainly. To whom shall I address it?" "To Colonel Edward Godwin, commanding the post." This was the information sought for. Enterprise was an occupied post. The demand was written, giving "one hour only for consideration, after which further delay will be at your peril." To the officer's question where he might be found at the end of the hour, Captain Forbes answered with, no doubt, unintended humor, that he would "fall back to the main body and there await the reply."* Then rejoining his company, he quietly turned his column to the right about and moved deliberately up the slope until out of sight of town, when, striking a gallop, we rode rapidly on until a safe distance had been reached.

Enterprise was, in fact, unoccupied until just before we reached it, when the Thirty-fifth Alabama Infantry arrived by train from the south. During the hour allowed for the surrender Major General Loring also came in from Meridian with the Seventh Kentucky and the Twelfth Louisiana,† and at the expiration of the truce these three regiments marched out to offer battle to the thirty-five men of Company B. There could be no doubt that we had done our full duty, for that day at least, in holding the attention of the enemy to the defense of the Mobile and Ohio road.

*This account of the demand for the surrender of Enterprise is taken from the manuscript of Col. Forbes. The writer was a witness of the transaction but remained with the company.

†See note B, extract from the *Jackson Appeal* of April 28, 1863.

In Pemberton's report to the war department, prepared some three months afterwards, is the statement that General Loring, by his timely arrival at Enterprise from Meridian with a sufficient force of infantry, succeeded in saving the machinery and other valuable property at that town, upon which the enemy had advanced with a demand for its surrender;* and Major-General Loring reports in a dispatch to Pemberton, dated at Enterprise April 25:† "Enemy appeared here at 1:00 o'clock and demanded the town. They were reported as fifteen hundred strong. Colonel Goodwin was here with the Thirty-fifth Alabama, which defied them. I hastened here with two regiments. Enemy fell back at least three miles. I am now on the road pursuing them."

It was fortunate indeed for us that Goodwin reached Enterprise before we did ourselves, for we were moving then directly opposite to Grierson's actual line of retreat, and if we had crossed the Mobile and Ohio road in search of him, we should unquestionably have been captured or broken up. As it was, we had lost, by this attempt to shorten our ride, much more than we had gained the preceding day, and we were beginning to despair of overtaking Grierson. A consultation was quietly held among the leading officers as we rode along. Which way should we go? Should we try to return to Lagrange alone? Should we go towards Vicksburg in the hope of getting through to Grant, who might by this time be on our side of the river? Should we try our luck on a march of some hundreds of miles to Pensacola, on the Gulf, then held by federal troops? Should we even break up and scatter, riding north by twos and threes, in the hope that, though some might be taken, the rest would escape? Or would we return to Grierson's trail and make another effort, under new disadvantages, at a direct pursuit? We stood three to one for the last alternative, and so we kept on for Garlandville, which we reached at dusk. As we approached the town our scouts came upon a mounted sentinel, one of a company of sixty men just organized there, well armed and determined to fight if the federals came again that way. He was informed that we were a company of confederates from Mobile, ourselves in pursuit of Grierson, and he considerably rode on in advance, at our suggestion, to advise his comrades of that fact, lest they should mistake us for federals and should fire on us in the dusk. By this ruse we rode without disturbance through the town, although it contained twice our number of armed enemies.

Following now on Grierson's trail once more, we stopped about midnight for four hours' sleep on the lawn about a planter's house, well off the main road, with only one man on guard. It was a carelessly fastened horse, however, which really kept watch for us. Becoming entangled in his halter strap, he pulled down the rail fence to which he was tied, with a crash which awakened the solitary sentinel, who had gone to sleep with his gun in his hands.

*Pemberton's final report. Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 253.

†Loring to Pemberton, April 25, Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 544. See also Buford to Pemberton, April 25, p. 538.

After a rapid breakfast by the light of our camp fires we started for the hardest and most discouraging ride of the raid. Approaching Raleigh, we repeated in substance the exploit at Philadelphia, surprising, by a headlong charge, a company of home guards which had gathered at the village inn, breaking up their guns and taking their captain with us as a prisoner. We were now but seven or eight hours behind the regiment, and hope began to dawn, when we came to a stream swollen with recent rains. The column had crossed on a bridge, which was now a wreck of blackened timbers. Grierson had given us up for lost and was burning his bridges behind him. Five times that day we swam our horses across overflowing streams, and once we were compelled to make a long detour to find a place where we could get into the water and out again.

And then a great danger loomed ahead of us. Some thirty or forty miles farther on was Strong river, and a few miles beyond that the Pearl, neither of which we could hope to ford or swim; and we were losing time, by reason of the burned bridges, instead of gaining on Grierson. Some way must be found to reach him before he destroyed Strong river bridge or we were lost; and so the captain called for volunteers to ride on and overtake the column. Three of us, who answered the call* mounted on the best and freshest horses of the company, leaving our arms and all encumbrances behind excepting only a pistol apiece and a few loose cartridges in our pockets, left the company at a gallop at about 5:00 o'clock in the afternoon. Captain Forbes says, in his posthumous manuscript: "I never expected to see one of them again, feeling sure that they would be picked off by stragglers." A few miles on the way we saw a group of saddled horses in the brush, a little distance from the road, with no riders in sight. We listened for shots as we hurried by, but they did not come. A little after sundown the trail we were following simply stopped in a grassy field and went no further. Puzzled at first, we presently suspected a countermarch, and following the trail back through the thickening dusk about half a mile, we found where it branched off to the left. If we had been a little later we should have been completely lost. Black night now fell, with drizzling rain, and we dismounted now and then to make sure, by feeling the road, that we were still on the track of the regiments. And by and by we began to hear, through the trees faint sounds of a marching column a mile or so ahead. Pushing our tired horses to their best, we presently drew near Grierson's rear guard. "Halt! Who comes there?" some one called out to us. Ignoring the command, we did not slacken our speed, but answered the challenge as we rode by with a shout of "Company B." Instantly a great cheer arose, "Company B has come back," and, caught up by the rear company, it ran down the column, cheer upon cheer, faster than our horses could run. Great was our welcome when we reached Grierson, just as his horse's hoofs were rattling on Strong river bridge, and repeated to him the vigorous message committed to us: "Captain Forbes presents his compliments, and begs to be allowed to burn his

*First Sergeant S. A. Forbes and Privates John Moulding and Arthur Woods.

bridges for himself." A detail had already been told off to burn the one we were on, and half an hour later we should have been too late.

In the meantime difficulties were thickening around the march of the company we had left. Stopping at sunset to feed, a citizen who professed to know which way Grierson had gone, offered to guide them by a short cut through the woods which would save them several miles of travel. Whether he was blundering or treacherous they never certainly knew, but he led them after dark into an old tornado track, or windfall, as it is called; and there, twisting and turning, this way and that, through the tangle of fallen tree trunks, they lost, not only their way, but all sense of direction likewise. Some of the men begged, in his hearing, to be allowed to kill the guide, and terror reduced him to temporary idiocy. There was nothing to do but to bivouac in the rain and wait for morning to come. Every one went to sleep, guards and all, and when the captain awoke at dawn, their guide had abandoned them and their prisoners had escaped, bearing within them, of course, news of the company's numbers, whereabouts, and predicament. By a rapid scout after daylight they discovered the trail of the column, and once more rode steadily on in the hope that their messengers of the day before had not failed in their mission. About the middle of the afternoon of that day, April 27, the company reached Strong river and found there a detachment of their regiment, left behind to guard the bridge and await their coming. Company B had rejoined the main command.

It was absent from the column five days and four nights, during which time it marched about three hundred miles in ten different counties and kept the attention of the enemy fixed on the defense of the Mobile and Ohio road. It captured and paroled forty prisoners, confronted and evaded several regiments of confederate troops at Macon and at Enterprise, slipped through the home guards of six county towns, was twice misled and once lost, and had five bridges burned in its front, and in three successive nights it had in all but six hours' sleep, while rations for man and horse were, for the most part, conspicuous by their absence. We simply had not had time to eat.

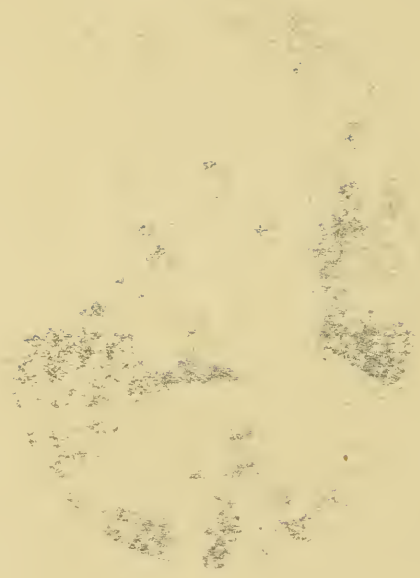
The main body was still engaged, on April 27, in crossing Pearl river by means of a single small ferry boat captured in the nick of time by a shrewd stratagem* the night before. When Grierson stopped on the evening of the 26th two miles beyond Westville for about two hours' rest, he sent Colonel Prince with two battalions of his regiment forward to the Pearl river ferry to secure the crossing of the column by the only means available. Arriving before daylight, Prince found that the ferry boat was on the opposite side of the stream. An attempt to secure it by sending a man across on a powerful horse failed because the swollen stream was too swift to swim, but a little later the owner, strolling down to the river and seeing a group of horsemen on the bank called out to them to know if they wished to cross. In a pronounced form of the southern dialect, made more convincing by a military oath, Colonel Prince demanded his boat to carry over a detach-

*Surby, p. 64.



EDWARD PRINCE,

Colonel Seventh Illinois Cavalry. Second in Command on the Grierson Raid.



ment of the First Alabama Cavalry in pursuit of conscripts. The ferryman hurried the boat over to our side of the stream, and the crossing at once began. Half an hour later a confederate courier appeared with orders to the ferryman to destroy his boat to prevent its falling into Grierson's hands.* Crossing twenty-four horses at a trip, Prince went with the first 200 men to seize Hazlehurst, on the New Orleans and Jackson road. Grierson's men, in the meantime, worked their passage over the Pearl, the rear guard crossing, along with Company B, about 2:00 p. m. of the 27th.

It was on the afternoon of the 28th, while approaching Union Church, that Grierson first found his march resisted; and here a dangerously complicated situation developed, from which all parties concerned escaped with remarkably good luck. Great destruction of rolling stock, ammunition, stores and railroad track had been wrought at Hazlehurst as the column passed on the preceding day,† and a battalion was sent back the next morning under Lt. Col. Trafton, of the Seventh, to destroy the road at Bahala a few miles further south.‡ At 2:00 p. m. of this day Grierson was attacked at Union Church by three companies of cavalry, which had come out from Natchez under Captain Cleveland;§ and Wirt Adams, making a forced march from Port Gibson, under Pemberton's orders of the preceding day,|| with four more cavalry companies and two pieces of artillery, came into the Natchez road that same afternoon, in Grierson's rear.¶ While following him up after dark with a view to a night attack, Adams' own rear was encountered by the battalion sent to Bahala earlier in the day, and now marching to rejoin Grierson.** Both federal and confederate, were thus cut in two, each by the other, and both Grierson and Adams were in a sense, between two fires. Adams was in the greater danger, however, because either section of the federal column was stronger than his own command, and so he rode in the night past Grierson's flank and joined Cleveland in his front.

It was no part of Grierson's plan to wait anywhere for anything—not even to fight—for the moment he did so his position would become a rallying point for all confederate forces, near and far. The next morning, consequently, after moving strongly out on the Natchez road to create the impression that he was about to force his way through, he suddenly reversed his movement, took a labyrinthine course, by unfrequented roads, to the rear, and by night was below Brookhaven, on the New Orleans and Jackson railroad, some forty miles away.†† Wirt Adams, in the meantime, had fallen back before Grierson's advance in the morning, to Fayette, where, reinforced by five more companies, he awaited an attack. One can imagine the

*Grierson's report. R. R., 24, pt. I, p. 526.

†Grierson's report. Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 526.

‡Grierson's report. Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 526.

§Pemberton to Bowen, April 27, Reb. rec., 24, pt. III, p. 792.

||Wirt Adams to Pemberton, April 29, Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 533. Cleveland to operator at Fayette, April 28, p. 538.

¶Grierson's report. Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 526. Surby, pp. 78—94.

**Grierson's report. Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 526, 527.

††General Grierson who is living now at Jacksonville, Ill., lately told the writer that he made use of a captured citizen to convey to colonel Adams information of his intention to fight his way through to Natchez. This gentleman, temporarily detained at headquarters, was permitted to overhear conversations and orders, made merely to deceive him, all implying a march for Natchez the next morning; and later a guard, instructed to be negligent, permitted him to slip away and escape.

chagrin with which this bold and energetic cavalry leader dispatched the facts to Pemberton that afternoon, expressing his intention to march at once to intercept Grierson on his way to Baton Rouge,* an intention which, indeed, he came near accomplishing, but in which he finally failed, owing to the start we had gained and to the extraordinary speed with which our last march was made.†

The next day, the 30th, was a hard day, for the New Orleans and Jackson railroad—now the Illinois Central—which was about as badly wrecked from Brookhaven‡ to Summit, a distance of twenty-one miles, as any road could well be in so short a time. § This was the day on which the advance of Grant's army, under McClelland, crossed the Mississippi to Bruinsburg for the attack on Port Gibson, made on the first of May. If Grierson had pressed forward on his march towards Grand Gulf, he might have joined McClelland at Port Gibson, then distant only thirty miles, provided that he had beaten Wirt Adams' ten companies of cavalry and section of artillery in his front, together with the reinforcements that might have come to them on the way. He had heard nothing from Grant, however, and had no means of knowing that McClelland was to come to our side of the Mississippi on the following day.

In the meantime confusion ruled the councils of our enemies. Interruption of communications by the destruction at Hazlehurst on the 27th|| had left Pemberton in doubt as to Grierson's course, and he vacillated, consequently, in his conjectures, between Grand Gulf, Jackson, Natchez, and Baton Rouge. On the 27th he notified Bowen, at Port Gibson, that Grierson might be making for Grand Gulf to fall on his rear; and again that Port Gibson or Black River bridge was his most probable destination.¶ On the 28th he wrote Bowen again that he had reason to believe that Grierson was striking for Natchez or Baton Rouge;* to Major Clark that the enemy might pay the confederates a visit at Brookhaven;†† to Rhodes, at Osyka, that Grierson was probably making for Baton Rouge or Natchez‡‡ to Gardner, at Port Hudson, that he was probably *en route* for Natchez, but that measures should be taken to ambuscade him if he was on his way to Baton Rouge.§§ He gave orders to Bowen at Grand Gulf, to send his cavalry out to get on Grierson's flank and rear;||| to the command-

*Wirt Adams to Pemberton, April 29, Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 533.

†On the night of April 30, Wirt Adams was within five miles of Grierson's bivouac. (See page 22.)

‡It fell to the writer, acting under orders from Col. Prince, to burn the railway station at Brookhaven, containing a considerable quantity of commissary stores reported to us to be confederate property. The flames and sparks from the station building greatly endangered neighboring dwellings, but these were saved and a general conflagration was prevented by our own soldiers, who climbed to the roofs of the houses and kept them wet by pouring water over them until the fire had burned down.

§Grierson's report, Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 527.

||Pemberton to Bowen, April 28, Reb. rec., 24, pt. III, p. 797.

¶Pemberton to Bowen, April 27, Reb. rec., 24, pt. III, p. 792.

**Pemberton to Bowen, April 28, R. R., 24, pt. III, p. 797.

††Pemberton to Clark, April 28, Reb. rec., 24, pt. III, p. 798.

‡‡Pemberton to Rhodes, April 28, Reb. rec., 24, pt. III, p. 799.

§§Pemberton to Gardner, April 28, Reb. rec., 24, pt. III, p. 798.

|||Pemberton to Bowen, April 27, R. R., 24, pt. III, p. 792. Pemberton to Steyenson, April 27, Reb. rec., 24, pt. III, p. 794.

ing officers at Brookhaven,* Hazlehurst,† and Osyka† to send their troops as rapidly as possible towards Grand Gulf; to Capt. William Wren, at Monticello, to learn the position of the enemy and to ambuscade and annoy him, particularly in his camp at night (R. R. Pt. III; p. 793); to Colonel Russel, at Jackson, to have his three mounted companies ready to move, with five days' rations, at 9:00 p. m.; to Colonel Reynolds,§ to Colonel Farrell,|| at Lake Station, to General Loring¶ at Meridian, and to General Tilghman** to bring their commands to Jackson; and to Ruggles at Columbus,†† to be on the watch for federal forces coming south—although he had ordered Barteau, the preceding day, to come down from northeast Mississippi to Hazlehurst, on the New Orleans and Jackson road.‡‡ Wholly uncertain as to Grierson's objective point, he thus tried to guard all points at once, as well as he could with his small and scattered forces; and reiterated to his cavalry commanders the orders to get on the flank and rear of the federal column, in the evident hope of so delaying its march as to enable him to concentrate against it a superior force.§§ All was in vain, however, and the flying column sped on its way untouched, and almost unseen, by its swarming enemies.

And now we approach the second crisis of the raid, the event of which was to show whether or not its brilliant success had been won at a cost of the loss of the raiding force. It was the first day of May. Six days before, and three times thereafter, Gardner, at Port Hudson, had been warned by Pemberton to prepare to capture Grierson if he should attempt to go through to Baton Rouge.¶¶ The focus of danger was Williams' bridge¶¶ across the Amite river, directly east of Port Hudson, and only some thirty miles from Gardner's army. If this bridge, over an unfordable stream which must be crossed to reach Baton Rouge, were either destroyed or held, the hunt was up and the raiders would probably be bagged; and when, at Summit, on the 30th, Grierson finally decided to make the dash for Baton Rouge*** he was even then more than twice as far from the Amite river bridge as was Gardner at Port Hudson.

The southern part of the State was now swarming with cavalry troops—sent northeast from Port Hudson,††† sent south by rail from Jackson and Meridan,†††† coming north from Ponchatoula, §§§§ and speeding diagonally down from Natchez and Port Gibson. |||| As early

*Pemberton to Clark, April 28, Reb. rec., 24, pt. III, p. 798.

†Pemberton to Commanding Officer of Cavalry, April 28, Reb. rec., 24, pt. III, p. 798.

‡Taylor to Russell, April 28, Reb. rec., 24, pt. III, p. 799.

§Pemberton to Reynolds, April 28, Reb. rec., 24, pt. III, p. 799.

||Pemberton to Farrell, April 28, Reb. rec., 24, pt. III, p. 798.

¶Pemberton to Loring, April 28, Reb. rec., 24, pt. III, p. 798.

**Pemberton to Tilghman, April 28, Reb. rec., 24, pt. III, p. 800.

††Pemberton to Ruggles, April 28, Reb. rec., 24, pt. III, p. 799.

‡‡Pemberton to Reynolds, April 27, Reb. rec., 24, pt. III, p. 794.

§§Pemberton's orders to Bowen, Clark, commanding officer cavalry, Porter, Powell and Rhodes, April 28, Reb. rec., 24, pt. III, pp. 797-799.

¶¶Pemberton to Gardner, April 24, Reb. rec., 24, pt. III, p. 782, April 25, pt. III, p. 786, April 27, pt. III, p. 793, April 28, pt. III, p. 798.

***Grierson's report, Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 527. Garland to Willson, May 1, pt. I, p. 543.

†††Grierson's report, Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 527.

††††De Baun to Willson, May 6, Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 539.

§§§Richardson to Pemberton, May 3, reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 547.

§§§§Simonton to Willson, April 30, Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 553.

||||Wirt Adams to Pemberton, May 5, Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 533.

as the 28th, before Grierson had reached Union Church, eleven companies were operating along the New Orleans and Jackson Road above Osyka.* A legion of infantry, with artillery, left Port Hudson on the 29th, the day Grierson passed Brookhaven, but committed the error of moving northeast to Clinton, and thence still northeast to Osyka, which it reached on the first day of May,† after Grierson had passed.‡

Richardson, coming down from the north by rail with 470 men, and leaving the cars at Hazlehurst on the 29th followed Grierson's trail to Union Church, and back again to Brookhaven, and then, riding all night, planned an attack on Grierson at Summit for the morning of May 1, but, entering this place at 3:00 a. m., he found himself nine hours too late. Thence he rode on—past Grierson's flank as he supposed, to get in his front—and formed an ambuscade at sunrise in the woods by the side of the road, between Summit and Magnolia, only to learn at 9:00 o'clock that his enemy had spent the night a dozen miles to the west.§ Wirt Adams, in the meantime, leaving Fayette on the afternoon of the 28th and following on our trail, had camped on this same night of the 30th, ten miles from Summit, on the Liberty road—evidently about five miles from Grierson's own camp. He is said to have sent Lieutenant Wren forward with orders to burn Williams' bridge across the Amite,|| with the intention of following on himself the next day to cut the federal column at that point.

Only two of all these swarming cavalry commands succeeded in reaching Grierson's line of march in advance of Grierson himself. To Major J. DeBaun, of the Ninth Louisiana Partisan Rangers (Wingfield's battalion) belongs the honor of having planted himself in the way of the advancing column and made a bold attempt to delay its march. Leaving Port Hudson April 28, under orders from General Gardner,¶ he went at first north to Woodville, and being then ordered east to Osyka, he started for that point on the morning of the 30th, and reach a bridge over the Tickfaw river, locally known as Wall's bridge, about eight miles from his place of destination, at 11:30 a. m. of May the first.** While he was halting to rest his men and horses, Grierson's column, which had struck the road behind him at about 10:00 o'clock, came upon his rear guard at this bridge.†† Some firing upon foragers from his command warned him of Grierson's approach, and gave him time to place his 115 men in ambush in the woods beyond the bridge. While a squad of our scouts, dressed in citizen's clothing and riding some distance in advance, were beguiling and capturing De Baun's rear guard, by whom they were supposed to be confederates, Lieutenant-Colonel Blackburn, of the Seventh Illinois, impatient of delay, came galloping down alone, and ordering the scouts

*Pemberton to Bowen, April 28, Reb. rec., 24, pt. III, p. 797.

†Miles' legion reached the Tickfaw river at Wall's bridge, five hours after Grierson had gone on. A wounded Federal soldier, who saw it pass his window, estimated its strength at three hundred cavalry, two thousand infantry, and a battery of artillery. (Surby, p. 153.)

‡Gardner to Pemberton, April 28, Reb. rec., pt. I, p. 542. Miles to Willson, May 5, pt. I, p. 545. Willson to Gardner, Special Orders, No. 121, April 29, pt. III, p. 805.

§Richardson to Pemberton, May 3, Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 548.

||Richardson to Pemberton, May 3, Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 549.

¶Willson, Special Orders, No. 120, April 28, Reb. rec., 24, pt. III, p. 800.

**De Baun to Willson, May 6, Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 539.

††Surby, p. 104, ff.

to follow him, dashed upon the bridge. This drew the fire of the secreted party, not more than fifty yards away. The colonel fell mortally wounded, and the leader of the scouts was shot through the thigh. Grierson's advance guard of a dozen men also charged across the bridge, but were driven back by a volley, leaving one killed and two wounded behind them. Two of Grierson's companies were thereupon dismounted, two cannon were brought up, and DeBaun's force was soon dislodged, and sent flying to Osyka, which place it reached at 5:00 p. m. The federal loss at this, the most important skirmish of the raid, was one man killed and five men wounded—two of them mortally—and three men left as volunteer prisoners, to care for their wounded comrades.* De Baun's own loss was a captain, lieutenant, and six men, all taken prisoners.†

Half a dozen miles farther down, a company of Mississippi cavalry which was about to enter the road in front of the column was attacked by our advance and presently driven off.‡ Major W. H. Garland, who was in charge of this party, makes the surprising statement, in his report of the skirmish, that he lost about seventy men, and that his horses were "all broke down."§ These losses must have occurred after the fighting was over.

In this exciting and somewhat ominous manner the long last ride began. When we started that morning at early dawn from our bivouac between Summit and Liberty, we were seventy-six miles from Baton Rouge,|| and it was not in any one's mind that we should halt for either food or rest before a place of safety had been reached. Even a little fight may mean a long delay, and delays just then were peculiarly dangerous. And so, with the speed of the horses set at the highest pace which they were likely to be able to keep to the end, we forged ahead, not so much to defeat as merely to outride our enemies. And still we had to pass the Amite river bridge, which might be held by a superior force, for all that we knew, or it might already be burned. From our right, as we approached it, there came to our ears from time to time, through the moonless night, the dull boom of a big gun, giving us the direction of Port Hudson, then being bombarded by the federal mortar-boats. We knew that there had lately been a picket at the Amite bridge, with its headquarters at a plantation half a mile away. Was this picket post still there, and would they learn of our approach and set fire to the bridge? About 12:00 o'clock we were in its immediate neighborhood, and the advance dashed down. A single horseman was moving quietly southward from the bridge towards the lights of the premises said to be the headquarters of the guard. They had not even suspected our approach; and in a few minutes, just as the moon rose to light us on our way, the muffled thunder of our horses' feet resounded from its entire length.

*Grierson's report, Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 527. Surby, p. 112.

†De Baun to Willson, May 6, Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 540.

‡De Baun to Willson, May 6, Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 540. Surby, p. 114.

§Garland to Willson, May 1, Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 543.

||Grierson's report, Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 528.

We were over the Amite, and the worst crisis of the raid was past. All the more heavily, as the excitement of danger died away, there settled down on the hearts of the raiders the overwhelming sense of hunger and fatigue. There were still some thirty miles to ride before we might halt to eat and rest, and I am sure that no one who rode them will ever forget that night. It was the painful duty of the rear guard of the column not only to keep alert themselves but also to keep the men from straggling. The captain of that company says: "Men by the score, and I think by fifties, were riding sound asleep in their saddles. The horses excessively tired and hungry, would stray out of the road and thrust their noses to the earth in hopes of finding something to eat. The men, when addressed, would remain silent and motionless until a blow across the thigh or the shoulder should awaken them, when it would be found that each supposed himself still riding with his company, which might perhaps be a mile ahead. We found several men who had either fallen from their horses, or dismounted and dropped on the ground, dead with sleep. Nothing short of a beating with the flat of a saber would awaken some of them. In several instances they begged to be allowed to sleep, saying that they would run all risk of capture on the morrow. Two or three did escape our vigilance, and were captured the next afternoon.*

While the rear of the column was thus drifting along through the night, more than half asleep, the advance, probably two miles in the lead, had its welcome aids to wakefulness in the complete surprise and capture of two confederate camps, each with about forty men—one at the crossing of the Big Sandy, and the other at a ford of the Comite, only a few miles out from our destination.†

Between 8:00 and 9:00 o'clock we were met by a cavalry company scouting out from Baton Rouge to learn the meaning of a rumor which had reached their camp that an important force was nearing the city. They knew nothing whatever of the raid, and were slow to believe our tale, as was also General Augur, then in command of the post. It was not until we had been in bivouac three hours, and after Grierson had visited post headquarters, that we were admitted to the federal lines and to the protection of the flag. As we rode at last through Baton Rouge, the streets were banked for a mile or more on either side with cheering crowds of citizens of the town and the soldiers of Augur's army, and the wayworn but triumphant column was brought to bivouac in a beautiful magnolia grove to the south of the city. It was pathetically significant of the stress and strain of the long hard ride, particularly on those responsible in any way for its successful issue, that the hero of the Enterprise episode, the captain of Company B of the Seventh, went suddenly delirious the next morning, as he lay resting by his camp fire, and was taken with cautious violence to the post hospital, tearing the curtains from the ambulance on the way, and swearing that we might kill him if we would but we could never take him prisoner.

And now the raid thus briefly described, it only remains for me to quote, from official reports, federal and confederate, a few comments

*MSS. of Col. H. C. Forbes.

†Grierson's report, Reb. rec., 24, pt. J, pp. 527, 528. Bryan to Miles, May 10, Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 537.

on its methods and on some of its more general results. Colonel Wirt Adams, who, it will be remembered, was left in the lurch by Grierson, at Fayette, April 29, wrote to Pemberton May 5:* "I pursued the cavalry to a point near Greensburg, in Louisiana, near which they forded the Amite river and made good their escape to Baton Rouge. Notwithstanding I marched over fifty miles per day, and moved during day and night, yet owing to the distance I had to traverse from west to east to reach the line of their march, and to their use of the most skillful guides and unfrequented roads, I found it impossible, to my great mortification and regret, to overhaul them. During the last twenty-four hours of their march in this state they traveled at a sweeping gallop, the numerous stolen horses previously collected furnishing them relays." Lieutenant-Colonel Gantt, who also failed in the pursuit, writes, May 4:† "The enemy managed so as to completely deceive the citizens and our scouts as to his purposes, and, by a march of almost unprecedented rapidity, moved off by the Greensburg road to Baton Rouge." Colonel E. V. Richardson, another failure in pursuit, says, May 3:‡ "He has made a most successful raid through the length of the state of Mississippi and a part of Louisiana, one which will exhilarate for a short time the fainting spirits of the northern war party;" and General Pemberton says in his final report:§ "The enemy * * * succeeded in destroying several miles of the track of the Southern Railroad west of Chunkey river, which, for more than a week, greatly delayed the transportation of troops, and entirely prevented that of supplies (except by wagons) from our depots on the Mobile and Ohio Railroad."

Grierson himself says of the said:|| "During the expedition we killed and wounded about 100 of the enemy, captured and paroled over 500 prisoners, many of them officers, destroyed between 50 and 60 miles of railroad and telegraph, captured and destroyed over 3,000 stand of arms, and other army stores and government property to an immense amount; and also captured 1,000 horses and mules. * * * We marched over six hundred miles in less than sixteen days. The last twenty-eight hours we marched seventy-six miles, had four engagements with the enemy, and forded the Comite river, which was deep enough to swim many of the horses. During this time the men and horses were without food or rest."

General Grant says, May 3:¶ "Colonel Grierson's raid from Lagrange through Mississippi has been the most successful thing of the kind since the breaking out of the Rebellion. * * * * The southern papers and southern people regard it as one of the most daring exploits of the war. I am told the whole state is filled with men paroled by Grierson." And again, May 6:** "He has spread excitement

*Adams to Pemberton, May 5, Reb. rec., 24, pt. 1, p. 523.

†Gantt to Willson, May 4, Reb. rec., 24, pt. 1, p. 540.

‡Richardson to Pemberton, May 3, Reb. rec., 24, pt. 1, p. 550.

§Pemberton's report, Reb. rec., 24, pt. 1, p. 253.

||Grierson's report, Reb. rec., 24, pt. 1, p. 528.

¶Grant to Halleck, May 3, Reb. rec., 24 pt. 1, p. 33.

**Grant to Halleck, May 6, Reb. rec., 24, pt. 1, p. 34.

throughout the state, destroying railroads, trestleworks, bridges, burning locomotives and railway stock, taking prisoners, and destroying stores of all kinds. To use the expression of my informant 'Grierson has knocked the heart out of the state.'” And finally, July 6, in his report to the War Department on the Vicksburg campaign, he writes:* “In accordance with previous instructions, Major-General S. A. Hurlbut started Colonel (now Brigadier-General) B. H. Grierson with a cavalry force from Lagrange, Tennessee, to make a raid through the central portion of the state of Mississippi, to destroy railroads and other public property, for the purpose of creating a diversion in favor of the army moving to the attack on Vicksburg. * * * This expedition was skillfully conducted, and reflects great credit on Colonel Grierson and all of his command. The notice given this raid by the southern press confirms our estimate of its importance. It has been one of the most brilliant cavalry exploits of the war, and will be handed down in history as an example to be imitated.”

Long may it be before it falls to an American soldier to imitate this feat of war; but it seems to fall particularly to this society to hand it down to history.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A.

Inception of Plans and Preliminary Orders for the Raid.—Various plans for a raid similar to the one finally decided on were suggested in February and March, 1863, after the withdrawal of Van Dorn's command from Northern Mississippi, late in January, left the confederate railroads of that part of the state comparatively unprotected. The first recorded mention of an expedition of this kind was made to General Hurlbut by General C. S. Hamilton, writing at Memphis February 12: “It is the time to strike the Vicksburg and Jackson road. I would recommend that a brigade of cavalry move from Lagrange around the headwaters of the Tallahatchie and Yalabusha, making as much of a demonstration as possible about Pontotoc; then the main body to retire, and a single regiment, under a dashing leader—say, Hatch—move to the south as rapidly as possible, taking fresh horses from the country, and push night and day direct for Jackson. * * * * The bridge over the Pearl river could be destroyed, as well as all the railroad shops and rolling stock, and a dash made at the Big Black river bridge, which, if destroyed, will completely isolate Vicksburg from the interior. After getting round the headwaters of the Yalabusha, the route should be as nearly as possible along the line of the Mississippi Central Road.” (R. R., Ser. I., Vol. 24, Pt. III., p. 45.)

A similar idea had occurred to General Grant, who wrote to Hurlbut from Lake Providence, La., February 13: “It seems to me that Grier-

*Grant to Kelton, July 6, Reb. rec., 24, pt. I, p. 58.

son, with about 500 picked men, might succeed in making his way south and cut the railroad east of Jackson, Miss. The undertaking would be a hazardous one, but it would pay well if carried out. I do not direct that this shall be done, but leave it for a volunteer enterprise." (R. R., Ser. I., Vol. 24, Pt. III., p. 50.)

Hamilton's proposal was followed up by Hurlbut in a letter to Rawlins (Grant's adjutant-general) written February 16, evidently before he had received Grant's own letter of three days earlier date. After reporting Van Dorn's withdrawal from his front with four brigades of cavalry and two batteries, he continues: "As I am satisfied this will remove all cavalry from our front, at the suggestion of General Hamilton, I have ordered Grierson's brigade to cross the headwaters of the Tallahatchie to the Yalabusha, by way of Pontotoc, cut the wires, destroy bridges and demonstrate in that neighborhood, while the Second Iowa Cavalry, Colonel Hatch, pushes night and day toward the main road between Meridian and Vicksburg, if possible to destroy the bridge across Pearl river, in rear of Jackson, and do as much damage as possible on that line, returning by the best course they can make. It appears perilous, but I think it can be done and done with safety, and may relieve you somewhat at Vicksburg." (R. R., Ser. I., Vol. 24, Pt. III., p. 58.)

In consequence of information received, February 20, of the presence of considerable bodies of confederate troops in central Mississippi, Hamilton suspended this movement, and Hurlbut, acquiescing, so reported to Grant. (R. R., Ser. I., Vol. 24, Pt. III., pp. 62 and 63.) March 9, General Grant expressed a qualified disapproval of this postponement, saying, "I regret that the expedition you had fitted out was not permitted to go. The weather, however, has been so intolerably bad ever since that it might have failed." In the same connection he described a plan of his own for a raid to start from Lagrange, under Grierson—"as being much better qualified to command this expedition than either Lee or Mizner"—to cut the railroad east of Jackson, afterward rejoining a still larger force which should operate in the meantime against the Mobile and Ohio road. (R. R., I., 24, Pt. III., p. 95.)

A somewhat similar scheme had meanwhile been discussed by the two officers most concerned in its execution, General William Sooy Smith, commander, at the time, of the First Division of Hurlbut's Sixteenth Army Corps, and Colonel B. H. Grierson in command of the First Cavalry Brigade, both these officers having their headquarters at Lagrange. Smith's plan, although directed to the same end as the others, differed from them especially in the fact that he wished the raiding column, after destroying the railroad east of Vicksburg, to avoid the confederate forces certain to concentrate against its return to Lagrange by pushing south to Baton Rouge; and Grierson agreed with Smith that this seemingly bolder course would be much the less hazardous. At a protracted conference "lasting until after midnight" held by them with Hurlbut, at Memphis, some time during the latter part of March,* they failed to convince Hurlbut of the superior ad-

*Smith says "about three weeks," before the receipt of Hurlbut's formal orders, issued April 10.

vantage of their plan, and his orders to Smith of April 10 specifically directed a return through northern Alabama. Confidently believing that Hurlbut's judgment was in error, Smith assumed the grave responsibility of personally ordering Grierson to go through to Baton Rouge, advising him at the same time that as soon as his connections were broken he was free to use his own discretion in meeting emergencies as they might arise, and that, after effecting his main purpose, he should go south or return to the north, as he might judge to be the most expedient. A letter from General Smith to the writer, dated May 4, 1907, upon which especially this statement is based, is as follows:

"Hurlbut's order to me April 10, his letter to Rawlins, and his final order to me April 16, specifically or by fair inference directed Grierson to return by way of north Alabama, and his orders were so understood by him and me. Grierson's brigade was part of my command guarding the Memphis and Charleston and other railroad lines, and repairing them whenever they were injured by the enemy holding the south bank of the Tallahatchie river, running east and west nearly parallel with the Memphis and Charleston road about forty miles further south.

"The rebel raiders, Forrest and Chalmers, made frequent forays, striking the railroad between the points garrisoned by our troops, tearing it up and then retreating beyond the Tallahatchie before they could be overtaken by our cavalry sent in pursuit. I determined, if I could get the consent of my superior officers, to turn the tables on them by sending our cavalry to the rear of their army and raiding their lines of communication, letting them have the fun of doing the chasing.

"Having talked the matter over with Grierson, who strongly approved the idea, we went to Memphis and discussed it with General Hurlbut during a long conversation at which Grierson was present. Hurlbut disapproved of the movement through to Baton Rouge, as too rash and hazardous. I urged it strenuously on the ground that it was far less dangerous to go on through than to attempt to return; which would bring him right into the hands of Forrest's and Chalmers' combined forces pursuing him. Grierson agreed with me and expressed full confidence in his ability to go through to Baton Rouge as we had planned.

"Hurlbut could not be convinced, and about three weeks later sent me the final orders referred to by you. [Order of April 10.] When I showed these orders to Grierson we were sorely puzzled, feeling that the raid as we had planned it promised almost certain success, and that it would spread consternation throughout the rebel territory, while any attempt to return by way of north Alabama would almost certainly end in disastrous failure.

"I finally said to Grierson that Hurlbut's order was directed to me and that he was not supposed to know what it was, that he would go in obedience to the orders I should give him, and that I would take the responsibility and order him to go straight through to our army at Baton Rouge. If he succeeded, no questions would be asked; and if he failed, I would take the consequences and should probably be cashiered for disobedience of orders.

"At all events, when he had passed to the rear of the enemy's lines south of the Tallahatchie his communications with us would be cut off, and he would have discretionary power, and it would be his duty and privilege to use his own best judgment as to the course it would be safest and best to take. Most likely, after the rebel cavalry had closed in behind him, he would not dare to try to get back, and would have to go right straight on to Baton Rouge.

"This was my final order to him, and I know of no other that was given to him by any one before his departure. He went south around the eastern end of the enemy's line, while I moved a brigade of infantry on Panola at the western end of it, making a strong diversion in his favor. He easily overcame all opposition made by the enemy and reached his destination without serious loss, having destroyed army stores and torn up railroads on his way, captured prisoners, and given the rebels a thorough and wide-spread shaking up. No more brilliant or effective raid was made by the troops of either army during the war of the rebellion.

"Grierson was an ideal cavalry officer—brave and dashing, cunning and resourceful—and his troops were excellent and well worthy of such a commander. The conception and general plan of the raid were mine. Its masterly execution belonged to Grierson and to his able and gallant subordinate officers and brave men, and to them and him I have always gladly given the praise they deserved."

NOTE B.

Local Effects of the Raid.—It was the sole object of the Grierson raid to break up railroads and to destroy transportation facilities and public property of the confederacy, and every effort was made by the leading officers to prevent interference with the persons and property of citizens, except as necessary to the safety of the command and the success of the expedition. General Grant in his order to Hurlbut of March 9 (R. R., 24, Pt. III., p. 95) says specifically, "The troops should be instructed to keep well together, and let marauding alone for once, and thereby better secure success." Grierson says in his report (R. R., 24, Pt. I., p. 524): "We arrived at Louisville soon after dark. I sent a battalion of the Sixth Illinois, under Major Starr, in advance, to picket the town and remain until the column had passed, when they were relieved by a battalion of the Seventh Illinois, under Major Graham, who was ordered to remain until we should have been gone an hour, to prevent persons leaving with information of the course we were taking, to drive out stragglers, preserve order, and quiet the fears of the people. They had heard of our coming a short time before we arrived, and many had left, taking only what they could hurriedly move. The column moved quietly through the town without halting, and not a thing was disturbed. Those who remained at home acknowledged that they were surprised. They had expected to be robbed, outraged and have their houses burned. On the contrary, they were protected in their persons and property." And in describing a skirmish with a company at Garlandville (page 525) he says: "After

disarming them, we showed them the folly of their actions, and released them. Without any exception they acknowledged their mistake, and declared that they had been grossly deceived as to our real character. One volunteered his services as guide, and upon leaving us declared that hereafter his prayers should be for the Union army. I mention this as a sample of the feeling which exists, and the good effect which our presence produced among the people in the country through which we passed." Nevertheless, the exigencies of the service demanded many acts on our part of a kind to cause wide-spread apprehension, and to leave behind us a broad trail of consternation and dismay. It was unavoidable that we should be obliged, after the first few days, to "live upon the country," with all that is implied by this expression; that as our horses gave out we should continue our march by seizing others in their place; and that negroes should be permitted to avail themselves of our presence to escape from bondage—facts which gave to the movement of Grierson's column through the length of the state the character of a great public calamity. Illustrations of the impression made by our movement are contained in the following extracts from the manuscript of Colonel Forbes, and from the southern newspapers of the time.

From the MS. of Col. H. C. Forbes.—We had not been long on our road [Starkville to Macon] before we were made aware of the ludicrous but tremendous panic which the raid was causing in these parts. As fast as men could ride and negroes run, the most exaggerated reports flew right and left, both as to the numbers and the conduct of our soldiers. Our hundreds became so many thousands, while our really restrained and considerate bearing towards the people was transmuted into every form of plunder and violence. The whole region was terrorized. The conscription had largely stripped the country of its natural defenders, yet there was a considerable contingent of white men to be found about the plantations. There were also many skulkers from the conscription and deserters from the confederate armies who were much more willing to shoot than to be shot. In every county and in most towns there were organizations of home guards, primarily raised to overawe the blacks and to keep in check the reckless elements of the population.

The women, the children, and the superannuated men completed the list. This heterogeneous and not wholly normal populace was thrown into the wildest excitement as we sped through. Some wished to fight; many chose to run; and all busied themselves with attempts to secrete their property. The flour and sugar were thrust into the remotest corner of the garret; the ham and bacon were buried under the houses or in the ash-heaps; the silver and china services were secreted under the soil of the freshly hoed gardens; the negro men were sent away into the swamps with the stock of all kinds, and oftentimes with wagon-loads of household stuff. The white men, unless bearing arms, were generally secreted from what was commonly supposed to be probable capture and possible murder, in whatever best hiding-place could be devised; while the women and children held the home against the invader—and well indeed they did it. I never saw a southern woman show undignified fear in her own home. They had the prej-

udices of their section and the expressiveness of their sex, and always a full broadside of both for the adventurous Yankee who lingered long enough to afford a fair mark. * * * * *

As, therefore, we moved towards Macon, we found ourselves in the midst of the left-hand crest of this panic-stricken overflow from the main march; a stampede which, as we afterwards learned, extended twenty to thirty miles in each direction.

From the Paulding (Mississippi) "Clarion" of May 1, 1863.—On last Friday morning a force of federal cavalry, supposed to be from twelve to fifteen hundred in number, with four pieces of light artillery, suddenly made their appearance at Newton Station, on the Southern railroad. They entered Philadelphia, Neshoba county, late Thursday evening, and early the next morning were at Newton, thirty-seven miles distant.

From all we can learn, this body of federals passed from North Mississippi through the counties of Pontotoc, Chickasaw, and Oktibeha, and through Philadelphia and Decatur to the Southern road.

* * * *

After leaving Newton Station, the federals proceeded to Garlandville, in Jasper county. This neighborhood being one of the richest in this part of the state, suffered severely from their depredations. As they approached Garlandville, three shots were fired at them, resulting in the killing of one of their horses and severely wounding one of the men, who was the next day left behind in Smith county. The parties who fired at them (Cole, Marshal, Levi and Chapman) escaped. From Garlandville they proceeded in the direction of Raleigh, and camped Friday night at Mr. C. M. Bender's, thirteen miles from Garlandville. They took all Mr. Bender's mules and two of his negroes, and consumed a large amount of his corn and meat. Before leaving Mr. B.'s they gave him a receipt for three thousand rations of meat and forage, signed by Wm. Prince, Colonel, Seventh Illinois cavalry, commanding second brigade, etc. From here they went to the residence of Elias Nichols, in Smith county, robbed him of all his mules, a carriage, several of his negroes, and a greater part of his corn and meat. They passed on from Nichols' to Raleigh.

A company of about fifty men, armed with double-barrel guns, were made up at Paulding on Saturday to defend the place; but hearing during the day that the federals had passed rapidly into Smith county, concluded it was useless to pursue them. But on Sunday news that a body of the enemy [Company B, Seventh Illinois] had again appeared at Garlandville, caused them to reassemble, and on Sunday night a good company left this place in their pursuit. On Monday morning they heard in Smith that they had left that county the day before, and there being no probability of overtaking them, they returned home.

A meeting of citizens of Jasper county, not subject to conscription, will be held in Paulding on next Monday, for the purpose of organizing a volunteer company of cavalry for home defense.

From the Jackson "Appeal" for April 28, 1863.—From various sources we have particulars of the enemy's movements from the north line of Mississippi, through the eastern portion of the State, almost to

the Louisiana line. The route chosen for this daring dash was through the line of counties lying between the Mobile and Ohio, and New Orleans, Jackson and Great Northern Railroads, in which, as they anticipated, there was no organized force to oppose them.

The penetration of an enemy's country, however, so extensively, will be recorded as one of the gallant feats of the war, no matter whether the actors escape or are captured. The expedition, we learn, was under command of Col. Grierson, of Illinois, who has already acquired considerable reputation as a dashing leader in west Tennessee. He boasted that he had no fears of his ability to extricate his command from the dangerous position it seemed to be in, but gave no indication as to the route he should take to get out of the country.

* * * After crossing Leaf river, the bridges behind them were burned. Last night, it appears to be authentically reported, they camped near Westville, in the southern part of Simpson county. Whether they will move thence to Natchez, via Monticello and Holmesville, can only be conjectured; but we still incline to the opinion so confidently expressed some days ago, on first being advised of their presence at Newton, that Baton Rouge will be their haven, if undisturbed. The crossing of Pearl river is the only natural difficulty they will encounter, and as we have no doubt they are advised as to the facilities they can secure at the different prominent fords, we presume they will act accordingly. Monticello and Holmesville may expect a visit.

The damage to the Southern railroad extends over a distance of four and a half miles, commencing a mile west of Newton, and running east. Two bridges, each about 150 feet long, seven culverts and one cattle cap, constitute the injury done. * * * Twenty freight cars were burned at Newton, and the depot buildings and two commissary buildings. The telegraph wire was taken down for miles, and cut in pieces. In many instances the wire was rolled up and put into the ditches and pools. But few poles were destroyed. We can hear of but little outrage having been committed upon the persons of non-combatants or upon their property, except by the seizure of every good horse, and of the necessary forage and provisions. They had to depend upon the country for these. * * * The safe at the railroad depot was broken open and the funds abstracted. The money was returned, however, by their commanding officer, with the exception of fifteen hundred dollars that, it was claimed, some of the men had stolen. The main body of the party in the movement upon Enterprise was halted at Hodge's residence, about five miles out, where they remained several hours. A detachment was sent to take the place [Company B, 7th Illinois], and they advanced with the greatest confidence. Fortunately, the Thirty-fifth Alabama, under Lieutenant-Colonel Goodman, arrived about the same time and met the advancing party as they were approaching the bridge. As our men were about to open fire a flag of truce was raised, when a parley ensued and a demand for a surrender was made. Colonel G. was expecting reinforcements every moment and asked time to consider. The Yankees then fell back and, Colonel Loring arriving with the Twelfth Louisiana, Colonel Scott, and the Seventh Kentucky, Major Bell, pursuit was commenced, when it was

found the advance had fallen back to the main body and all had gone. A fruitless effort to come up with them was made some miles further, but they had evidently become alarmed and feared an encounter.

At Doctor Hodge's the main body halted several hours. * * * Some of them entered the doctor's enclosure and required his daughters to furnish them provisions, which was done to the extent of cooked articles on hand. The rose bushes and flower beds of the young ladies were also sadly despoiled by the unwelcome visitors, but beyond this, our informant says they did no damage, nor did they insult the ladies. The doctor was absent.

From the Augusta Georgia "Constitutionalist," May 8, 1863.—Their boldness and impudence in some cases were remarkable. A couple of their scouts were sent into Hazlehurst an hour or two before their raid upon the place, who walked boldly into the telegraph office and penned a dispatch to Jackson,* stating that the Yankee raiders had turned to the northeast. Their true character, however, being recognized, there was some talk of arresting them, when they—the Yankees—drew their pistols, defied the officers and men of the town, mounted their horses and rejoined their commands, then within two or three miles of the place, after which the whole force entered the town in squads of fifty and a hundred—several hours' interval between the van and rear guards—as leisurely and with as much nonchalance as our country people would ride into town on a gala day.

From the Columbus (Mississippi) "Republic."—The past week has been an eventful one. The boldest, and we may say one of the most successful, raids of cavalry that has been known since the war began, has been made (we say it with shame) through the very center of Mississippi, and at the time of this writing we fear have escaped without the loss of a man. We are almost inclined to believe the words of a correspondent, that the manhood of Mississippi had gone to the wars; women only were left, although some of them wore the garb of men. We do not know where the responsibility rests, but wherever it is, if it is not a fit and proper subject for court martial, we are afraid there are none * * * * * It is reported that between four and five thousand federal cavalry started on this raid. They divided; some fifteen hundred,† or perhaps a few more, stopped and gave Colonel Bartheau battle, while the remainder, three thousand strong,‡ marched directly south, scouring the country, from eight to ten miles wide leaving the railroad, south of West Point, on their left. They encamped one night within twenty-five miles of this place. They destroyed the hospital at Okolona§ and a few other buildings, passing south through Houston, Silam and Starkville, to within one mile of Macon, and thence south to Newton Station, on the Southern road, which we learn they destroyed. We can learn of no serious damage done or any ill

*This dispatch was written by Colonel Prince, of the 7th, and sent to Hazlehurst by two of the scouts. (Stribb, p. 67.)

†Hatch's 500 men of the Second Iowa.

‡Grierson's 950 men of the 6th and 7th Illinois.

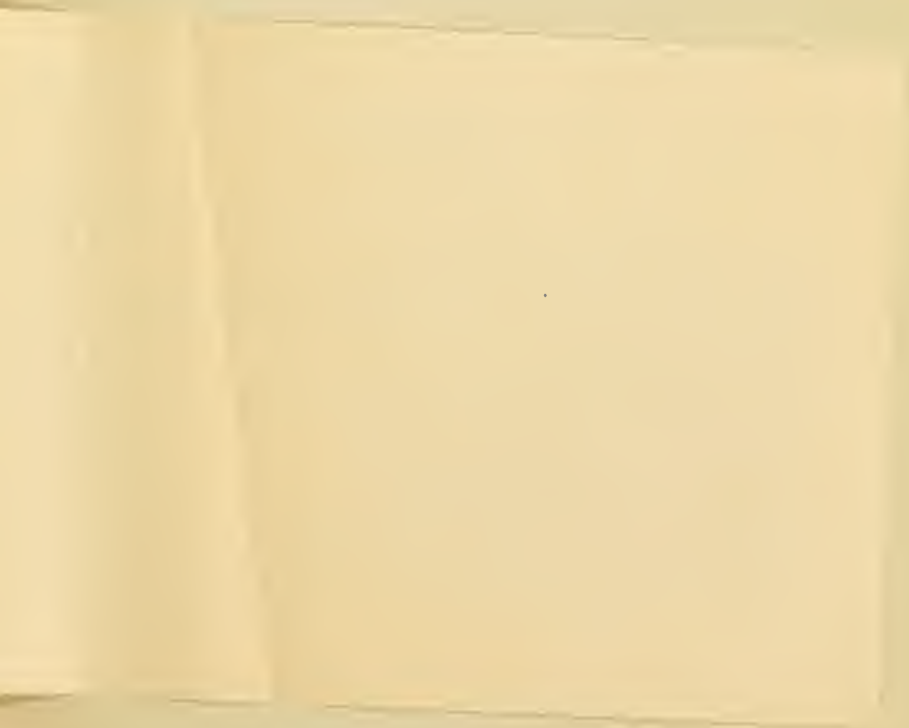
§Hatch's command.

Forbe's company.

treatment to the inhabitants personally. Their main objects seem to have been to examine the country and robbery—taking horses, mules and a few negroes.

At Starkville they robbed the inhabitants of horses, mules, negroes, jewelry and money; went into the stores and threw their contents (principally tobacco) into the street or gave it to the negroes; caught the mail boy and took the mail, robbed the postoffice, but handed back a letter from a soldier to his wife, containing \$50.00, and ordered the postmaster to give it to her. Doctor Montgomery was taken prisoner and kept in camp all night, six miles from town, and allowed to return home next morning, after relieving him of his watch and other valuables. Hale & Murdock's hat wagon, loaded with wool hats, passing through at the time, was captured. They gave the hats to the negroes and took the mules. Starkville can boast of better head covering for its negroes than any other town in the state.

They left quite a number of broken down horses all along their route, supplying themselves as they went. They stated that they were not destroying property; that they were gentlemen.



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